

BUFORA

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AIMS :

1. To encourage and promote unbiased scientific investigation and research into Unidentified Flying Object phenomena.
2. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to Unidentified Flying Objects.
3. To co-ordinate UFO Research on a nation-wide scale and co-operate with persons and organisations engaged upon similar research in all parts of the world.

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THE BUFORA JOURNAL

Volume 4 Number 4

Autumn 1974.

Editor: NORMAN OLIVER.

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EDITORIAL

I have received a number of letters recently from BUFORA members who feel that facilities provided for the North of England are sadly lacking when compared to the South. Amongst those writing have been Chris Randles (who has summarised a large proportion of the sighting reports in this issue), and Michael Dean.

As one connected with BUFORA's administration in one way or another almost continuously over the last ten years, I cannot but feel that these strictures are largely justified. However, it is one thing to acknowledge they are justified and another to know exactly what to do to rectify matters (I recall that almost the first letter I replied to back in 1965 was from a DIGAP member complaining of lack of facilities!). So—can I ask members who feel they are 'out of things' to write in suggesting ways in which better communications and facilities could be brought about. Bear in mind though, that, whilst BUFORA's membership is increasing steadily, the number of ACTIVE members in any one part of the country will not be unlimited!

It is true to say that BUFORA's Executive is very conscious that BUFORA—a National Association—should not become solely identified with the South in general and London in particular and all suggestions will be passed to the Committee for consideration. We sincerely hope that with the anticipated advent of Charity status it will become possible to channel more of our resources into making members ALL over the country feel they belong to an active Association in all spheres—not just one they receive a magazine from every three months! Please though, remember that all those engaged in making the Association's wheels turn, do so voluntarily—and we do like to have a little spare time left over for ourselves!

Let's have those suggestions.

NORMAN OLIVER.

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LONDON OFFICE

It has long been the Committee's wish, and that of a number of members, that the Association should have a London Office. Initially this would be manned on a voluntary basis. Our immediate problem is to find premises. Offers or practical suggestions will be welcomed. Our needs are relatively straight-forward. We need a small office, which can be used as a postal address, preferably with telephone installed, where we can store our files and archives. A prestige address is unnecessary at the present time, but somewhere close to public transport would be an advantage. Perhaps there is a company with a little spare space we could use? Perhaps you know of an office we could rent cheaply somewhere, or a room in a private house is another possibility? In fact the predecessor to BUFORA, the London U.F.O. Research Organisation, used to make use of a room in a private house on Saturdays, which was manned by officials on a rota basis. The files and library were lodged there permanently. If you need further information, or have an offer or suggestion, please contact the Honorary Secretary, Miss Betty Wood or Vice-Chairman Lionel Beer.

TRACKING UFOs BY RANGEFINDER

INTRODUCTION

Some while ago in this Journal, I described a method of modifying a photographic tripod and binoculars into an integrated piece of equipment suitable for tracking artificial satellites and observing UFOs as well as being able to carry out modest surveying work. In this article, however, I intend to concentrate on the ufological uses. This equipment is the first step towards a more ambitious system capable of giving an enormous amount of first-hand accurate data. It will be appreciated that just one tracking tripod is insufficient to give any estimate of an object's range, unless one is fortunate enough to spot the object under a *known* cloud base (thereby giving a maximum range—knowing the elevation angle, observation point, height, etc.), or against a known background or landmarks.

The answer is to have two tripods stationed a fair distance apart to form a base line from which triangulation can be achieved. Both tripods or tracking stations are set up and then locked on to the object using the method described in the previous article*. All one has to do is to triangulate using the elevation bearing angles, simple trigonometrical formulae or by graphical method. In this way, not only the range, but also the height and size of the object can be determined. Once the range has been established, the actual linear velocity can easily be calculated by measuring the angular velocity: this is achieved by noting the time taken to travel in and out of ONE binocular's field of view (which is known), trying if possible to take measurements when the object's trajectory is normal to the sight-line from the tripod, otherwise errors (if not allowed for) will occur. Under favourable conditions it should be possible to obtain several fix points along the track permitting the actual course of the object to be plotted on ordnance survey maps. This is done by automatically recording the data onto a portable tape recorder.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

What has been discussed so far may seem a trifle heavy going, but the operation of the equipment is far easier than may at first be thought. Only one problem remains—how does one obtain data from two tracking stations one or two miles apart? Obviously some form of communication is required—a pretty efficient system too, as the objects being evaluated are not going to pose for us! They will be moving and possibly at quite fast angular velocities. Several possibilities come to mind:

- (1) Radio contact with 'walkie-talkies.'
- (2) Amateur radio equipment.
- (3) Morse code by light signals.
- (4) Modulated light transmissions.
- (5) Laser beam communications.

- (1) Unfortunately, communication by means of 'walkie-talkies' is illegal in this country unless approved equipment is used and a proper Licence obtained.

- (2) Is a possibility, but the chances of having the necessary tracking equipment and two spare licenced 'hams' with portable equipment together at the same time are quite remote. Also, the type of transmission they will be required to carry out (bearing in mind the high rate of exchange of information) will contravene their regulations as well—which brings us back to the good old G.P.O. again!
- (3) Light signals using Morse Code are also out—as the rate of exchange of information needs to be high—too high for this method. Using light signals also means that both observation sites should be in direct line-of-sight which is not always possible. Besides, one cannot look at signals and the object at the same time.
- (4) Modulated light transmission is also out of the question for several reasons. If conventional methods are used the frequency response and range are severely limited: infra-red devices have their own problems regarding lining up of transmitter/receivers and the range is again limited.
- (5) The use of laser beams for communication is extremely complex and expensive: they also require ridiculously accurate lining-up procedures—definitely not for us!

Having argued against every possibility listed so far, what else—if anything? Well it just so happens there is one system that will meet all our requirements: it has been designed and tested out by the author and has proved to be entirely satisfactory. Named the 'Field-Fence' system, it is in fact very similar to commercial radio telephones in operation, but using the audio part of the spectrum—transmitting speech along landlines. The most important point is that you do not have to carry around a mile of multicore cable on a reel. (Did I say reel—have you ever seen a mile of multicore cable rolled up?). No, you simply connect and transmit through the nearest wire fence which, hopefully, just happens to be sitting there waiting to be used! In fact, the system is so sensitive that it is only necessary to transmit through ONE wire using the earth as a return conductor—by means of metal earth spikes. This is assuming, of course, that the fence is of the wooden-post variety as metal fence posts would short the signal to earth.

Naturally, most wire fences do not generally run for more than 50-100 yards without joints, so these should ideally be by-passed using hook-up wire, and the joints bonded. Properly done, this system should last as long as the fence! Fortunately the Warminster area boasts many long fences, and at present over $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of fencing has been connected up by the author.

The 'Field-Fence' system uses integrated circuit output stages giving a low transmitting source impedance, and high impedance/high sensitivity receiving inputs which enable a signal to be received through 20 million ohms. This, in theory, would give a range of hundreds of miles, but because of multiple shunt resistances (due to wet grass touching the signal wires and wet fence posts lowering the line impedance even further) the range is reduced, but is still in excess of the longest fence that would ever be encountered—probably in the region of 20 to 30 miles under favourable conditions. Obviously, this is to our advantage, since enough signal is available to overcome any high-resistance joints in the fencing.

The system is completely portable: it uses light emitting diodes for indicators, has a separate microphone at each end giving good frequency response, has outputs for headphones and cassette tape recorders and runs for over forty hours on standby from two small torch batteries. One small bonus is that the communicators can be set to receive Radio 2 long wave—the wire fencing acting as a rather efficient aerial! Very convenient for those long, lonely skywatch hours!

OPERATION

The operation of the complete system is rather simple—once an object has been located, the other tracking station is alerted and both stations then lock onto the object. On the word of command, both stop tracking at the same instant. The controls are then locked and the relevant data regarding elevation, bearing, angular velocity, angular size, etc., is leisurely recorded onto a cassette tape from both tracking stations and tracking recommenced. After as many fix-points as required have been recorded and after the object has ceased to be visible, the tape is played back and the data transferred to a map of the area giving the precise location or ‘flight-path.’ The linear velocity, height and physical size can then be calculated.

In the setting-up procedure, both tripods must naturally be aligned to the same reference point using an accurately calibrated compass, or better still, on clear nights using the pole star—Polaris. This latter reference point is better, since it is far more accurate and is close to grid-north—which is convenient for map references.

ACCURACY

The whole system has recently been tested under daylight conditions using ordnance survey markers as triangulation points. The error has been found to be approximately 1° (one degree) on stationary objects. Taking this sort of angular accuracy, together with an extended base line of 1 to 2 miles, and taking an object’s range accuracy of $\pm 20\%$ as a standard to aim for, a range of several miles can easily be achieved. However, the accuracy under normal conditions on mobile targets depends on the way the system is used. Figure 1 gives the effective range chart with regard to bearing (0° - 360°) only.

As will be seen from Figure 1, with the base line between stations ‘A’ and ‘B’ along the west-east axis, the range capability is at maximum for an object due north or south. However, this diminishes as the object swings away from the north or south until the effective range (considering bearing only) falls to zero with the object due west or east. This is because the rangefinder vectors from the two tracking stations tend to reach a parallel condition where a small angular error gives rise to an infinite positional error. Therefore, to counteract this and to obtain maximum range accuracy, bearing measurements should be taken when the object tends towards a point perpendicular to the base line—in this particular case, north to south. Fortunately, however, the range of an object due west or east of the west-east base line can be calculated by means of differential elevation as shown in Figure 2.

Once again, as may be expected, the range capability using elevation only, alters as the object’s position changes—being at maximum when the object is overhead of the two tracking stations, and falling to zero for low angles in the west and east, also reaching zero as the target swings north or south. Under the latter condition, however, the range can be calculated by differential bearing angles as previously described—so all is well.

FIG. I
PLAN VIEW

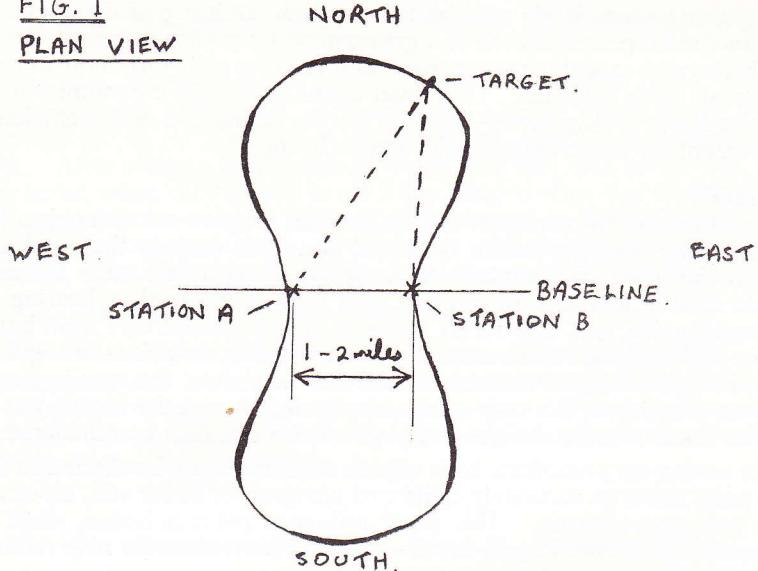
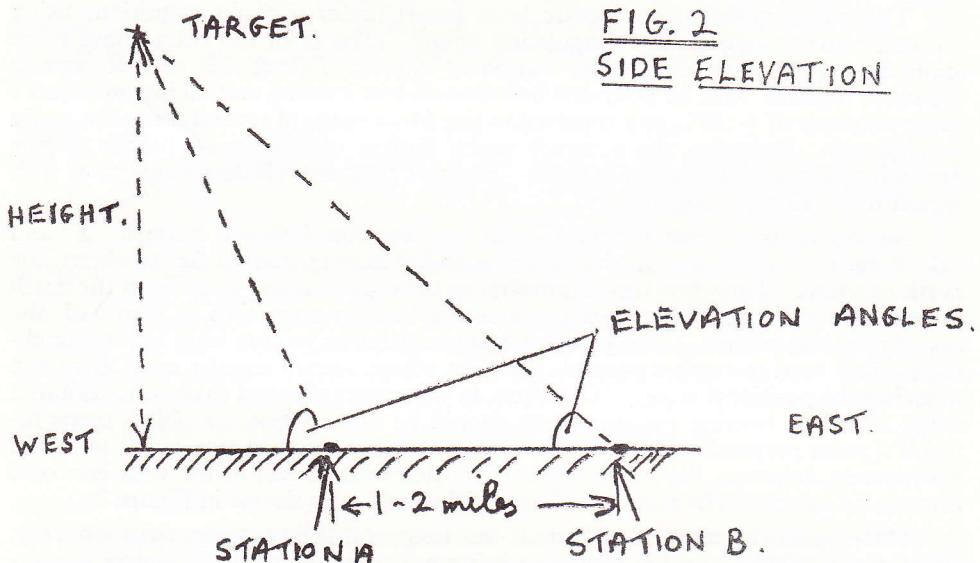


FIG. 2
SIDE ELEVATION



As can be seen, with the Base Line between stations 'A' and 'B' along the west-east axis, the range capability is at maximum for an object due north or south. However, this diminishes as the object swings away from the north or south until the effective range (considering bearing only) falls to zero with the object due West or East. This is because the rangefinder vectors from the two tracking stations tend to reach a parallel condition where a small angular error gives rise to an infinite positional error. Therefore, to counteract this and to obtain maximum range accuracy, bearing measurements should be taken when the object tends toward a point perpendicular to the Base Line—in this particular case—north or south. Fortunately, however, the range of an object due west or east of the west-east Base Line can be calculated by means of differential elevation as shown in Fig. 2.

SUMMARY

To sum up: Because of the compound methods of obtaining the range with the system, any object travelling in almost any direction will eventually have to pass through a 'window' area where measurements can accurately be taken, even those first appearing toward the ends of the base line which, incidentally, can be orientated in any direction. The base line orientation will mainly be influenced by the direction taken by the fencing used for communication. An alternative system which would eliminate the 'end-on' problem would use three tripods—the third set at right angles to the other two in an 'L' configuration, but this is unnecessarily complicated.

No one really knows for sure the origin(s) of UFOs, but one thing has become increasingly obvious to the author over the years: that is, instrumentation must play an important part in field research, otherwise no data at all can reliably be gleaned from objects seen first hand at night (or even during the day) unless one has the dubious blessing of a close approach or 'landing.'

The author feels sure that this tracking system could play an important role in data collection if skywatch groups could be persuaded to invest in such equipment, not only for their own benefit, but also to the advancement of ufological field research in general.

PETER A. THURGOOD.

Footnote :—Prospective 'Field-Fence' system users should bear in mind that before using *any fence* for communication purposes, permission should first be sought!

* See BUFORA Journal, Vol. 3, No. 9. Winter 1972/3.

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APPEAL TO LONDON MEMBERS . . . ACCOMMODATION NEEDED

The Association urgently needs a room in London in which to preserve its small library and general files. The library consists of about 200 books, occupying a medium-sized bookcase, and the magazines and files are mostly contained in two filing cabinets. If you have a spare room, or perhaps part of a room, which the Association could use for storage purposes, the Committee would be very pleased to hear from you. Naturally it would be an advantage if you were willing to take on the post of librarian, but this is not essential. The Committee would particularly like to hear from someone living in the London postal area. In return for your help, the Association would reimburse your expenses or consider paying a small rent in keeping with its budget and voluntary status. Please contact the Honorary Secretary, Miss Betty Wood, 6 Carn Avenue, London W.5., or Vice-Chairman Lionel Beer.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

There has been comparatively little UFO activity throughout Great Britain during the past two years. Will this continue to be the case or is this merely the calm before the storm? BUFORA does not intend to take any chances. Your Committee firmly believes that, as Britain's major UFO Research Association, BUFORA must continue to improve its capability of investigating UFO reports nationwide in an efficient and business-like manner. Presently, the absence of any form of full-time or part-time staff severely restricts BUFORA's operations and our credibility with the media and the scientific community. During the next two years we hope to remedy this in a number of ways.

The most important step must be to put BUFORA on a proper constitutional foundation so that the Association can expand in the most beneficial way. Hence the resolution which was passed at last year's Annual General Meeting authorising the Committee to register BUFORA as a Charitable organisation in order to improve its status and to obtain the very valuable taxation advantages accruing to Charities.

On taking professional advice, your Committee decided that before registering as a Charity, it would be extremely sensible in the interests of all the members to incorporate BUFORA as a company limited by guarantee. There are two main advantages of doing this. First, the present *UNLIMITED* liability of every member will be limited to £1 each in the event of a successful court claim being brought against the Association or one of its defaulting officers and this is clearly very necessary as BUFORA expands its activities. Secondly, BUFORA will adopt a standard constitution laid down by the Companies Acts of 1948 and 1967 which has the merits of being both comprehensive and proven. The new constitution, which will be called the Memorandum and Articles of Association of BUFORA, has been drafted to suit the particular requirements of BUFORA and the major part of the existing constitution has been perpetuated either in the Memorandum and Articles or in Bye-laws which can be made under the new constitution. For instance, the existing aims of BUFORA have undergone little change.

Certain significant changes have been made so that BUFORA can comply with the strict requirements of both the Companies Acts and the Charities Act 1960. Of these, perhaps two changes deserve particular mention. First, although the new Constitution cannot be changed without the consent of the membership in general meeting, the Committee, or Council of Management as it will be called, will be empowered to make, amend or cancel Bye-laws or regulations governing the details of operation of the Association and this will include matters relating to the financing of BUFORA, such as changes in the amount of entrance fees, subscriptions and the like. Secondly, members of the Council will be required to retire in rotation which involves one third retiring every year and, therefore, the maximum time that any Council member can serve on election is three years; but retiring members are of course eligible for re-election. This is designed to provide for continuity in the running of the Association which will become increasingly necessary in view of the voluntary nature of such service. Members are reminded that all Committee members contribute their services voluntarily to the Association in their spare time and the new Constitution will prevent Council members from receiving any form of payment or profit from BUFORA apart from reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, which, incidentally, most Committee members do not customarily claim to the full.

BUFORA's membership is growing steadily, thanks to your loyal support, but, unfortunately, unless this trend continues even further, inflation will cause greater havoc with the Association's finances. Your Committee has decided to take a calculated risk by *NOT* recommending an increase in subscription rates for *this* coming year. We do earnestly hope that you will support us in this decision by renewing your membership even though an increase in subscription rates will inevitably be required the following year. However, the financial and other benefits that incorporation and registration as a Charity will bring should enable BUFORA to ride the inflationary bronco long enough to develop and prosper far into the future, providing of course that the Association does not lose your valuable support. I sincerely hope that the Association can count upon your support to meet the challenge that the future years present to us all.

ROGER H. STANWAY,
Chairman.

5th September, 1974.

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WHO IS JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS ?

C. F. Lockwood

Scientists who study UFO reports sometimes accuse Ufologists of jumping to conclusions, which they want to infer, instead of being objective. Since part of my training included a study of statistics, I have always been critical of those who generalise on the basis of small samples. It can be very misleading to declare, for instance, that UFOs have been known to put out crop fires, if there is only one report of such an incident.¹

We are all inclined to generalise from insufficient evidence on occasions, but even traditional scientists are guilty of the same error. For example, I have encountered numerous articles by astronomers in which they calculate that there must be hundreds of thousands of stars in the universe around which life-bearing planets move, but that only a small number of these planets would have civilisations on them sufficiently advanced to communicate, let alone visit, each other. In 'UFOs—A Scientific Debate' edited by Sagan and Page, we read of the Dolphin Formula, $N = \frac{1}{10} L$, where N is the number of civilisations capable of communicating with ours, and L is the lifetime in years of each civilisation.² What cheek for scientists to generalise about the timespan of thousands of civilisations, when no one has evidence about the end of even one civilisation! If I were to study one tree for a few months, then, without reference to any other trees, but simply considering the immediate environment of that one plant, if I were to forecast how long all other trees would live, I should be ridiculed. But this is the kind of argument which is used by the anti-UFO theoreticians, as if it were scientifically more valid than the deductions which Ufologists try to make from sighting reports.

I am not arguing that such reasoning should not be attempted, but simply that deductive thinking should be distinguished from inductive, and while the deductions of the mathematician can be checked for validity, the more usual inductive "laws" of the scientist are subject to constant revision in the light of new evidence. For instance, many scientists are convinced that ball lightning, quarks and black holes exist, but many are not. However, none of the doubters would criticise their colleagues for searching for further evidence. So why should anyone criticise Ufologists in their quest?

My advice to students of the UFO phenomenon is "Go ahead on two lines of attack. Be prepared to listen to the person who has some wild ideas, but remember that if we can get answers by traditional techniques, we shall find it easier to dovetail some parts of the UFO problem into current scientific knowledge." The advantage of using traditional explanations is that they facilitate more accurate prediction, which is the key to scientific progress.

We must not forget that traditional science enabled us to put men on the Moon, so Newton and Einstein cannot be wholly wrong. In other words, those who say that the answer to UFOs lies in parapsychology or in spiritualism should not overstate their claim. These subjects present many problems which appear to be connected with the UFO phenomenon, but not the answers which would enable us to make predictions, or say how UFOs are related to our terrestrial environment. When a psychic researcher attempts to photograph a ghost, he is trying to relate a paranormal phenomenon to our normal material records, not necessarily to produce a new science completely unrelated to traditional science. It may well be that parapsychological techniques will help us to measure UFO data. But measure we must, not just describe.

This is why in articles in the Research Bulletin I have tentatively indicated some parameters, which UFO observers could measure, if they had the right equipment on hand, e.g. colour filters or diffraction gratings for the camera. This is also why I am particularly keen that within Phase 2 of the Research Projects Programme we delineate other parameters which we can try to measure, in witnesses as well as in the environment, and I hope that any BUFORA members who can suggest such measurements will get in touch with the Research Department. We are, of course, not the first in this field, and we must study the work of others.³

I began this article by criticising those who misuse probability data. If the highly improbable never happened, no one would ever fill in a pools coupon. A mathematician says that the theoretical probability P of a tail when one tosses a double-headed coin is $P = 0$, while the probability of a head with such a coin is $P = 1$, and all other probability values will lie between 0 and 1, i.e. will be positive fractions. To apply probability values to UFO sightings can be very misleading, because we may be wildly wrong about the limits of the total or sample populations. Yet we find an Australian scientist, Prof. R. D. Brown, reported in the APRO Bulletin of May-June 1973 stating that, while life elsewhere in the universe is "probably" (my inverted commas) common, the distances involved are so great that trips across space would be very infrequent, therefore flying saucers are to be ruled out, because they are reported too frequently.

Prof. Brown is guilty here of an incredible string of assumptions, which he does not make explicit. He should say, "If the only form of intelligent life which could visit Earth is similar to human life, if the conditions of star systems are as we infer from our measurements, if we have detected all the nearest stars,⁴ if Einstein is right and nothing can travel faster than light or exist otherwise than in 4 dimensional space-time, if there is no special reason for our Solar System to be visited, and if all flying saucer sightings are of equal merit, then UFOs cannot display characteristics of intelligent non-terrestrial operation." But if they do display such characteristics, then one or more of these assumptions may be wrong. I should not be surprised if there is an error in all six.

Notes—

1. Phenomenes Spatiaux, No. 36, June 1973, page 6, reported that a disc-shaped object extinguished a fire in a Moroccan cornfield in June 1968, witnessed by several people.
2. Op. cit. page 23, Chap. 3, Astronomers' Views on UFOs, by Franklin Roach. I would challenge the range of values of L quoted, which suggest that most civilisations are unlikely to last more than 100,000 years, perhaps none as long as 10 million years. We have so little evidence for such statements, that I think we should allow a much larger range of values.
3. Interstellar Research will be known to many, but there are others.
4. New Scientist, 20 April, 1972, page 120, "astrophysicist Prof. D. Lynden-Bell commented on hearing of this startling piece of research that the nearest four or five stars may be unknown."

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Lionel Beer

SKY PHENOMENON IN THE REIGN OF GEORGE IV

A friend kindly supplies this item from an 1828 diary, whose unknown author is presumed to have resided in the Wisbech area of Cambridgeshire. By the way, did you know that Jules Verne was born in February 1828, and Friedrich Wöhler's synthesis of urea in the same year heralded the birth of organic chemistry, which could eventually lead us into the fields of genetic engineering (make your own real live monster)? The diary item is dated 30th September, 1828:

"Last night about half past eight at night, my father called me out to observe a luminous appearance in the heavens of a most extraordinary kind, it seemed like a stream of light which commenced in the west not far above the horizon, and extended like a broad bow till it nearly reached the eastern horizon, but its termination was much less distinctly observable than in the west, it seemed rather to die away in to nothing—it was at times brighter than others and at one time I observed it make a very visible trail towards the south, which produced a bend in the western end of it. I heard no one give the least feasible account of it. Earlier in the evening there were some flashes of aurora borealis—some referred it too that."

Perhaps our amateur astronomers might be interested in checking further into this event?

MEETING PROGRAMMES AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Due to administrative problems it was not practical to mail this year's London lecture programme cards to you before September, and the N.E.C. offer their apologies. Quite apart from this, several members manage to mislay their programmes during the year. One solution for London members, might be to glance at the "Lectures" column of WHAT'S ON IN LONDON. Visitors to London will find this weekly magazine provides a comprehensive guide to entertainments in and around the capital. TIME OUT "London's Living Guide," started life as a weekly "underground" magazine, having a different slant from WHAT'S ON. Some would say it leans to the left, but its coverage of the London scene and activities is excellent. BUFORA is indebted to both publications for regularly listing our lecture dates in the past. The two London evening papers, the EVENING STANDARD and the EVENING NEWS, have both mentioned our meetings from time to time in their "Weekend Events" and "In London Tomorrow" columns respectively, and it seems that these columns are well read on a Friday evening to judge by results.

INFLATION

FLYING SAUCER REVIEW now insists on charging 40p each for both current issues and back numbers, despite some of these bearing a cover price of only 25p. However, this increase pales besides the Aetherius Society. Last year they sold a 16-page pro-Adamski booklet by "Dr." George King for 15p. On 1st June 1974, the society upped the price to 70p. I make this to be an increase of over 450%. Now I know inflation is raging—but this is ridiculous! Incidentally, for a non-member to attend a lecture with colour slides at Aetherius House in the Fulham Road, the admission charge is 75p. Now BUFORA charges a temporary—membership admission fee of 35p for its meetings in a well-appointed lecture suite. Your 35p even includes coffee and biscuits! Need I say more? (Yes I had—full BUFORA members pay only 20p).

MERSEYSIDE NEWS

Michael Dean, secretary of a school group, The Wirral UFO Society, claims that over 100 people attended their Northern UFO conference (not the first in Merseyside area—Mike) held on 29th June, at Wirral Grammar School. He has been interviewed on Radio Merseyside, and he and friends have appeared on the BBC TV programme "Look North," with accompanying publicity in the local press. Mike kindly says that they have mentioned BUFORA during their various interviews. Incidentally, Richard Vinten, one of our London investigators, took part in a Radio London phone-in show in May, which he says went well.

HELP NEEDED!

BUFORA continues to subscribe to a press cutting service, and help is needed in sorting out clippings and pasting them into a book for posterity. This is an interesting job for anyone with a few evenings or weekend afternoons to spare, and you will be helping BUFORA. Please telephone 01-723 0305 for details, preferably late evening.

LIONEL BEER.

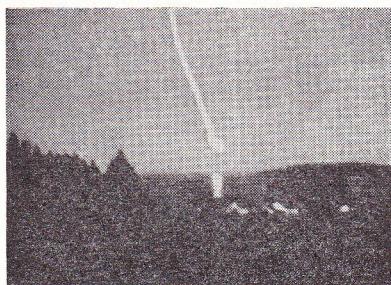
FROM HERE AND THERE

Our first selection in this 'pot-pourri' of UFO and UFO-related items received from press cuttings, BUFORA members and other sources come from my good friend Harold Chibbett—my thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Gee for permission to publish. Harold Chibbett writes:—

UFO IN NOVA SCOTIA

On Sunday, 6th August, 1972, I was invited to meet Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Pobiner at the Leinster Tower Hotel in Leinster Gardens, London SW. They were American tourists on holiday in this country, and had only arrived that morning. They were friends of friends of Mr. & Mrs. J. Gee, and had expressed a wish to meet anyone who knew about UFOs, because they had a couple of slides which they thought might be of interest to researchers.

Briefly, their story was as follows: On August 6th, 1971, they were on holiday in Nova Scotia, and were visiting a small resort called Ingonish, near what is known as Cabot Trail. The time was between 8.15 p.m. and 8.45 p.m. Suddenly, Mr. Pobiner saw what appeared to be a brilliant sunset, but immediately realised that this could not be so, since it was not in the right direction.



On the spur of the moment, he took a snap of the light in the sky, which appeared to be stationary or nearly so, rolled the films on, and then took another. He did not assign any great significance to the event, because up to then he had not taken any interest in UFOs. He and his wife turned away to go, but a boy with them had continued looking, and he reported that the object had then shot away at tremendous speed, and vanished.

I suggested to Mr. Pobiner that perhaps he had seen an airplane, glinting in the setting sun. (I said this because when I looked at the slides—we had no viewer apparatus with us—it looked as though there was a vapour trail behind what might have been a high-flying plane). But he was emphatic that what they had all seen was not a normal flying machine of any known kind, neither was it Venus or any other star.

I mentioned that there appeared to be a vapour trail on the prints, but Mr. Pobiner asserted that the (apparently) stationary light had been so brilliant that he had not seen the trail when the pictures were taken. The taking of the snapshot

had not taken more than ten seconds. In the bottom picture there is a light. This was the illumination of Keltic Lodge, the lights of which had just been switched on, as darkness descends rapidly in that region.

Mr. Pobiner's address is: 12, Belleyue Avenue, Dobbs Ferry, New York, U.S.A., if anyone wants to write to him with questions or for further details.

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The following report is being followed up by our Investigation section, but practical difficulties and recalcitrant transport have so far hindered attempts to obtain further information.

BEDFORD BEINGS

One evening at about 10.30 p.m. in February of this year, Mr. Ken Price and a friend who wishes to remain anonymous who we will call Mr. Jones, were sitting at Mr. Price's home, when suddenly Mr. Jones stood up and went out.

When asked the following evening why he had left so suddenly, Mr. Jones said he had been 'told' to go. He found himself near a power station; waited a few minutes then saw out of the corner of his eye two "men." He turned round quickly but they had both disappeared.

That same evening at about 12.30 a.m. the same thing happened, only this time there were about 5 or 7 'humanoid' shapes, and when they walked it was in a very strange way, some even crawling round on all fours. At this time Mr. Jones had his dog with him, which after a few minutes, became very nervous and started to jump up at him. A little later on, one of the 'beings' seemed to look straight at him, and then it bent its head and as an object on it began to glow its eyes began to glow also—a brilliant red. Then the 'being' touched its belt and a brilliant beam of light shone from it. Just then a whistle-like sound could be heard, and Mr. Jones ran away.

Mr. Jones persuaded Mr. Price to go with him the following evening and when they got there, almost immediately Mr. Jones could see the 'beings,' but it took Mr. Price a little while to see a vague shape. Mr. Jones told him that they were doing the same as on the previous evenings. They went the following evening, and the same things happened yet again, so they decided to ask an investigation group to the site. They talked to the members of the group, and at about 12.30 a.m. they decided to go to the site to find out if they could see the 'beings' again, but nothing was visible to members of the group. Mr. Jones has also reported seeing the beings near an electric sub-station.

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I.O.W. UFOs

There have been quite a number of reports from the Isle of Wight recently and one of the best is quoted here from an article in the Southern Evening Echo of August 17th "Saturday, 10th August brought a fresh lot of sightings. Among them was the account of Mr. C. Laing of Hilton Road, Gurnard, a keen amateur astronomer who was watching the planet Jupiter (currently at its closest to Earth) with a telescope from cliffs near his home.

An object emitting a 'distinct orange glow' approached his vantage point from the north at great speed. "I should make it clear that in my lengthy studies of the heavens I have become acquainted with the appearance of most forms of conventional aircraft, and this was not a vehicle or projectile of human construction" he said.

Mr. Laing added: "The most remarkable anomaly was that as it receded from me, it slightly altered course to eastward in a manner comparable to no natural phenomenon of which I am aware in my experience. He timed the sighting at 9.17 p.m.

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TWO FROM THE PAST

BUFORA member L. Bowkett has sent in the next two items—he knows the witnesses concerned who wish to remain anonymous, and vouches for their sincerity.

1.—The first sighting was nearly fifteen years ago. Two people were at Plymouth, holidaying. Walking along the beach at night they saw a bright, cigar-shaped object (I hate to use this expression) swoop down near them. It was glowing red, and apparently very hot. They were naturally afraid, but the object avoided them, and passed close to a military vessel which was a silver-grey colour. When the object had disappeared (at amazing speed), the people looked back towards the ship. All of the paint was either blistered or peeled, or burned off. On enquiries being made, the explanation was that a newly tested rocket had done this (but what rocket could swoop down, circle the ship, and speed off in a matter of seconds, red-hot and glowing all over?). More recent enquiries have shown that this incident has apparently been forgotten.

2.—Approximately eight years ago, two close friends of mine were coming home from a visit when looking up at the sky they saw a disc-shaped object hovering over their house. Drink? They had had none. From their car it looked close, but nearer the house they saw that it was high in the sky, and obviously huge. It was surrounded by a pale blue light, and it hung there for some three minutes, before moving off at a great speed, vertically, until it was out of sight. It is difficult to get my friends to talk about this nowadays.

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PRESS CUTTINGS

Even if we could wish for more UFO reports, the press—certainly the provincial press seems to be giving the subject good coverage at the moment: amongst the many cuttings received—far too many to mention more than a fraction, have been the following:—

THE MIDDLESEX CHRONICLE of August 9 reviewed a talk on UFOs given by Committee member Peter Wain to a meeting of the Mystic Forum at East Twickenham. Peter gives many such talks and it's nice to know they don't go unrecorded.

A skywatch by Michael Dean and other members of the very active Wirral UFO Society was given good coverage in the LIVERPOOL DAILY POST of June 24, photo included. THE BURTON OBSERVER of July 4 (and many other papers) recorded the latest American Gallup poll findings that 15 million Americans claim to have seen a UFO and 51% of the adult population believe they are real. No trace of an object believed to have descended into the Lea Valley Banbury Reservoir has yet been found, according to the WALTHAMSTOW GUARDIAN of July 12, though the reservoir is now almost drained down to three feet of mud at the bottom. A UFO which became an IFO found a mention in the HEREFORD EVENING NEWS of August 7: it was a 'mysterious silver object' hanging poised in the sky—subsequently indentified, however, as a test balloon from Cardington.

THE NORTHANTS CHRONICLE & ECHO of August 23, refers to a sighting of 'moving objects' made over Little Houghton by a Mr. Gayton and the columnist goes on to mention that a colleague saw 'travelling lights' at about the same time whilst on holiday on Ireland's south coast. THE MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS of June 26 (and other papers) refers to the U.S. Army Missile base at Huntsville, Alabama, picking up 'ghost ships' on their radar scanners last summer, and also mentions an ICBM nose cone which was tracked down by a UFO when descending from about 400,000 feet—also recorded on radar. The organisation of a course on UFOs by the Avon Education Authority finds a mention under the heading of 'Avon's Above' in the DAILY EXPRESS of August 26.

W.A.T.S.U.P.'s (The Wessex Association for the Study of Unexplained Phenomena), newsletter comes in for an honourable mention in the pages of the SOUTHERN EVENING ECHO of Aguust 9. In turn SIGAP's (The Surrey Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena) magazine Pegasus is reviewed, and SIGAP's activities well covered in an article on August 16 in the ALDERSHOT EVENING NEWS. Finally, the BEXLEYHEATH OBSERVER of August 1 devotes several columns to the North-West Kent UFO Society formed early in 1973, quoting several reports and giving full details of the Society.

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CHINGFORD FOLLOW-UP

I am indebted for this item, to Barry King, who, with Ian Vinten was a witness to the UFO incident reported in our last Journal. Firstly, Barry makes the following further points in connection with the sighting:—

- “ 1.—Size of the UFO was estimated at 50ft. across.
- 2.—When I mentioned that the figures we saw in Report No. 1 to Ian were the “ Spirits ” of two Enfield children, I was only joking.
- 3.—There was a third witness to the 2nd report, which included the UFO, but when approached he would have nothing to do with it. During the sighting this man was standing outside his home, less than 10 yards directly behind us, and must have seen everything.

4.—Also during the whole sighting, cars were going by us all the time but as usual hardly anyone bothered to look.

5.—There is tree damage in the immediate surrounding area where we saw the UFO, but when we searched a week after the sighting we could find no traces of a landing site, perhaps before I noticed it, it was hovering behind the ridge and didn't land at all.

6.—In our joint estimation the UFO passed above us (not directly, slightly to the left of us) within 1000ft. and climbing, so surely many other people would have seen it further along its line of travel.

7.—I will maintain even now what I said at the time, we were not just " lucky " in sighting these figures and the UFO, I'll swear it was planned, they laid on a show on purpose, but what purpose ?

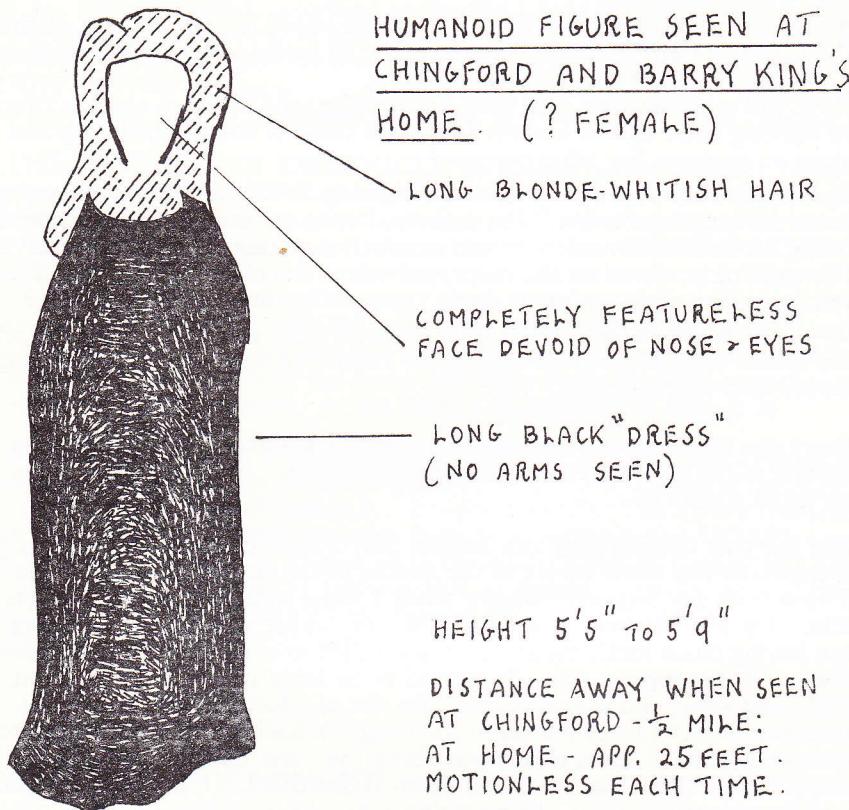
8.—People have said to me since the sighting " Why didn't you go and get a better look, get nearer like," I'm no hero, I'm no coward either, but under these out of the ordinary situations would anyone risk getting too near, especially since this sighting occurred on the exact spot where two children were found dead a few years ago, almost without doubt connected with a UFO, or UFOs ?

9.—Until we know what these objects are (UFOs) you won't catch me getting any nearer than 500 yards to one, unless I know for sure it will be safe enough to do so, then very gingerly."

Barry also tells me of a futher incident which could well have a connection with the sighting of the UFO and the figures on the ground. In his words, quoting from a letter dated August 10

" For the past five nights (from August 5th) I have been searching the sky for meteors, as you know we are in the middle of the richest shower, the Perseids, I view from my bedroom window when I retire to bed, sometimes as late as 2 a.m. On one occasion at around 1.30 a.m. whilst watching for meteors (and not having much luck), my attention was called to a bobbing red light travelling East to West, approx. 45°. It seemed to be fairly near, I'd say no more than 250 yards away, and it looked about the size of a football at that distance. My bedroom window faces North, overlooking a school, on the roof of the school there is a weather vane, and it was above this vane that the bobbing red light stopped and " bounced " up and down a few times. I say bounced because its movements were just like bouncing a ball on the ground. After watching this funny little thing for maybe 5 or 6 minutes I lost all interest in meteors I can tell you. While the red lights remained static above the weather vane, I had the notion to grab my torch and flash the object a couple of times, nothing, it didn't move, so I continued flashing on and off, I got a response that time, it bobbed about and travelled back on its original course, now travelling West to East. When it was directly opposite my window it dissolved into nothing, frantically searching the sky for half an hour afterwards proved useless, it had gone. It was nearly 2.15 a.m. by my watch. I lit up a cigarette and sat gazing out of the window, still thinking about the little red light. After a couple of minutes I heard a rustling noise in our back garden (which I overlook), and I got the shock of my life. Standing at the end of the garden further from the

house (approx. 11 yards) was a tallish figure of a girl or woman (well I say girl or woman because of the long hair—shoulder length—but in these days who really knows). Well anyway this figure standing there completely still, it was the same one both Ian Vinten and myself spotted at Chingford before seeing the UFO.



The figure had the same black dress effort, that went all the way down to the feet, and had long hair, a funny whiteish blonde. Still trembling a great deal and half hiding behind the wall next to the window, I shone my torch at her, or its, face, as on the last occasion its face was the only part 'blanked' off. I wish I hadn't now, the beam caught the figure in the face, but even at this close range its face refused to let me see any eyes, mouth, nose, anything; it was an absolute blank. I confess to the fact that my nerves then got the better of me, I slunk low away from the window, literally hoping the thing would go away. After several minutes I decided to take a little peep out of the window just to see, but it had gone."

BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

Phew! Having given our reviews an extremely lean time of it in our last two issues, I have here to pay for my sins of omissions—I hope our reviewers will now forgive me! Just one point—in two cases the same book has been reviewed by different people and where this has occurred the book titles are marked with an asterisk.

ED.

REVIEW 1

THE GOLD OF THE GODS by Erich von Däniken, published by Souvenir Press, 1973. pp. 216: Illus. £2·20.

The latest but one of the ebullient Erich von Däniken's books gets off to an intriguing enough beginning, but, as far as I am concerned, never lives up to its potential. The author commences with the discovery of the mysterious system of caves and tunnels in Ecuador and gives us some tantalising glimpses of the wonderful golden artifacts claimed to have been found there. However, just when one is getting really interested, it falls rather flat, and everything is abandoned for further speculations on Mr. von Däniken's eternal theme of spacemen visiting earth in the ancient past. One had hoped by this third book that he would have begun to expand his views, but instead they seem to be ossifying.

This is not to say that earth never was visited in the past by visitors from elsewhere, but to relate every mysterious construction on earth back to this hypothesis becomes most irritating after a while. To give the author his due, he *does* get around—this book marks the culmination, we are told, of a 76,000 miles journey around the world. To date I feel he has done a fairly good job in stirring things up, irritating the hidebound and uncovering a few odd corners for the open-minded. But now his continual insistence on the "spacemen" theory may eventually lose him much of his support. If he can regard elephant's trunks on "gods" as primitive representations of breathing masks for astronauts, then he will believe anything. His Palenque tomb carving of an "astronaut" has already been fairly well explained away as, not a rocket from outer space, but the symbolic tree of life—much more likely on a tomb.

Many weird and complicated "god" figures are derived from the subconscious, being well known to researchers in the fields of psychiatry and occultism and to peoples of unsophisticated cultures. Given the necessary techniques, most of us could conjure them up for ourselves and possibly do, in our dreams and meditations. But this does not mean we all have a common memory of spacemen visiting us in the past.

If only the author would occasionally get out of his groove, one could say that this was a really exciting book—just from the archaeological side alone. If all is as claimed, then there is enough here to keep several teams of archaeologists wildly happy for years.

BETTY WOOD.

MAN AND THE STARS*—Contact and Communication with Other Intelligences by Duncan Lunan. Souvenir Press, 1974. £3·50.

Duncan Lunan believes that there may be an unmanned space probe from another planet orbiting this earth, and that certain unexplained radio signals received in 1928 were an attempt to make contact with intelligent life on earth. By plotting the series of signals received he thinks a diagram of the constellation Boötes was transmitted with one star out of position. If the same series had been retransmitted from earth, but with the constellation correctly shown, contact with an extra-terrestrial civilisation could have been initiated.

This theory and its development occupy a small part near the end of this 300-page book, and this original idea has led to the publicity which the author has received over recent months. Further signals were received which Mr. Lunan believes gave added information on the space probe's origins. The mathematical and diagrammatic proofs with which the author seeks to prove his hypothesis are beyond the understanding of the average layman such as myself. Those who are able to comprehend such matters should obtain a copy of the book to decide for themselves if Mr. Lunan proves his point and if his evidence is sufficiently convincing.

The greater part of the book is an examination of the possibilities of extra-terrestrial contact developed in terms of our own space technology. First the number of possible life-bearing planets within reasonable distance (a mere 12 light years), is calculated. Then theoretical methods of propulsion are considered such as fusion drive, photon drive and the interstellar ramscoop. 'Life As we Know It' deals with the biological questions, manlike or monsters? Next, he considers the question—Why go at all? Would it be for colonisation or to keep mankind on a dying world in existence elsewhere? Perhaps using colony starships or the deep-freezing of astronauts during the centuries-long journey. All the ideas explored by science-fiction writers are presented and discussed; in fact Mr. Lunan has written science-fiction stories himself. This book would, indeed, be a very useful guide to situations and space technique for a budding sci-fi writer.

Chapter 11 is called 'They Find Us,' and is more likely to be of immediate interest to ufologists. The various reactions that the earth authorities should take to an approaching space vehicle are laid out in an orderly manner under such headings as 'Landing in city,' 'Appearance in orbit,' 'They land openly, but without warning,' 'They land in secret,' etc. I particularly like the suggestion that in the event of a space-ship landing but showing no signs of life, '... we should build a mock-up of the ship and practise cutting in where they can see it, to give them warning.'

One would expect that such a lively mind as Mr. Lunan's would be open to the idea of UFOs and knowledgeable about them. But this is not the case. As with so many other enthusiasts of space exploration, the idea that 'they' may be here already and have given us a thorough look-over is totally rejected. Quoting

from his book: ‘ As former President of a spaceflight society . . . talking to the public at exhibitions and the like, I’ve found that the common attitude is “ Oh, I’ve no interest in any of that. If it was Flying Saucers, now . . . ” ’ A very large section of public opinion has completely lost interest in scientific progress because it believes that we are *already* in contact with beings not only millions of years ahead of us, but on a different technological track in some way spiritually superior to our own. These people are likely to be severely shaken if the real thing does not fit their pre-conceptions, and their mental readjustments may be the most painful of all. Perhaps the very same point could be made about Mr. Lunan and his colleagues. It seems that they have first formed their hypothesis and now look for the facts to fit it.

Chapter 13 is called 'Did Anyone Follow It Up?' and looks at the historical evidence for possible space artefacts. Starting with the Salzburg cube he ventures across the Piri Reis map on to the Tibetan stone discs, the pyramids, and other landmarks of Von Däniken country, finishing at Easter Island, understandably unimpressed.

In the last few pages the author takes a look at flying saucers. 'The Saucers' behaviour is quite unlike what we'd expect of spacecraft: that it's gone unchanged for so long, strongly suggests that they're natural phenomena. Every so often throughout the book, Mr. Lunan presents ideas which many ufologists consider to be approaching the truth, but to the author they are too ridiculous to be seriously considered and are added with a sense of sarcasm. Thus on page 310 in his argument dismissing all claims to contact he writes: '... if all human achievement is misdirected they'd contact people who've achieved little or nothing.' And a few lines later: '... the visitors' motives could be suspected of being mischievous at the very least.' On page 308 he writes: '... the saucers seem positively to *avoid* rational Contact.'

Perhaps if he could put as much unbiased effort into his examination of the evidence for the UFO as he has done into the areas of space technology and astronomy, Duncan Lunan's next book could be an interesting addition to UFO writings!

COLIN BORD.

WARMINSTER SKYWATCH CARAVAN will be available from Easter until the end of October, details from Mrs. M. Corey, 61 Corton, Nr. WARMINSTER, Wilts., or Mr. A. West, 16 Southway, BURGESS HILL, Sussex.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—

Publications Dept. will now be:— c/o A. West, 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex.

CONGRATULATIONS to our Vice-President, the Hon. Brindsley le Poer Trench, on his recent marriage.

BOOK NEWS

BOOK NEWS

BUFORA members will remember the news last year that a Mr. Duncan Lunan had surprised the British Interplanetary Society with his alleged discovery that an alien space probe had tried to contact us by radio. (DAILY TELEGRAPH 1972, Dec. 24 and subsequent publicity). The source of the data was early radio experiments in the late 1920's. All this evidence and more—with which the BIS was evidently impressed—is presented within an excellently comprehensive layman's guide to methods and prospects of contact with extra-terrestrial life. *(**MAN AND THE STARS—Duncan Lunan. Publ. Souvenir Press, 95 Mortimer St., London W1N 8HP. £3.50.**) UFOs are treated somewhat sceptically, but in the healthiest possible sense. The book is nicely illustrated. It is not sufficiently technical to become a scientific reference. It is, however, eminently readable (apart from occasional quotes from "sci-fi" material such as "STAR TREK").

Erich von Däniken certainly started a trend with CHARIOTS OF THE GODS. UFO book-reviewers have since been plagued with a plethora of literature of the same ilk—little of it original. (In any case, von Däniken had been long preceded by writers such as W. Raymond Drake). Von Däniken's fourth book—**IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT GODS—My pictorial evidence for the impossible.** **Souvenir Press. £2.95**—has just appeared. Despite my natural aversion to von Däniken's "NEWS OF THE WORLD" style, I admit I like the pretty pictures in this book. Many are in colour, and most seem to have been extracted from the excellent Constantin film CHARIOTS OF THE GODS. The price of the book seems very reasonable for one so profusely illustrated.

Andrew Tomas' second book **ON THE SHORES OF ENDLESS WORLDS—Souvenir Press—£2.50**, follows the same sort of argument—have we been visited? If you liked Andrew's first book you'll probably like this too. Another book which takes up the von Däniken theme is **THE SPACESHIPS OF EZEKIEL** by J. F. Blumrich—publ. Corgi, Transworld Publrs. Ltd., Cavendish Ho., 57-59 Uxbridge Rd., London W5. £0.50—p'back. Mr. Blumrich, chief of the systems layout branch of NASA, compares phenomena reported in Biblical "visions" with present-day spacecraft. Interesting, but tenuous. Incidentally, Corgi have just published Allen Hynek's book **THE UFO EXPERIENCE** as an inexpensive paperback, an idea I suggested to several publishers some months back. Another book which has appeared in paper-back is **Janet and Colin Bord's** excellent pictorial guide **MYSTERIOUS BRITAIN—publ. Paladin. £0.90.** The format is reduced making those of us with myopia still more myopic.

By contrast with the "early visitation" theories, **HIDDEN WORLDS (van der Veer & Moerman—publ. Souvenir Press. £2.50)**, interprets the same evidence as meaning that an advanced terrestrial civilisation existed in the mists of prehistory. Interesting to compare with the other hypotheses, and, at face value, more likely.

*UFOs FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN (**Hobana & Weverbergh—publ. Souvenir Press.**—£3.00), is, I think, the first UFO book from behind the Iron Curtain. While presenting in a clear manner both UFO evidence and information about Eastern research activities the book maintains a refreshingly open-minded, non-committal attitude. It is nicely produced and well-illustrated. I thoroughly recommend it, and feel that it will rank among the best UFO "reference books." Although I have not been sent a copy for review, I understand that **Mary Long** has just had her second book published by **Grant Helm** (£3.30). This is entitled **OUR SON MOVES AMONG YOU**. Until I have read this book I will maintain open-minded attitudes, but I will hope that the book is not the collection of nonsense that the publishers' handout suggests. At face value highly dubious. But, if you like that sort of thing . . .

Two non-UFO books which may well interest ufologists are **H. G. Wells' THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME** (Corgi 75p), first published in the 1920's, and **Adrian Berry's THE NEXT TEN THOUSAND YEARS** (publ. **Jonathan Cape £2.50**). Both contain predictions of the future for the technological world. Some of Wells' predictions have already been shown to be astonishingly accurate. They cover the period from AD 1929 to AD 2105. Adrian Berry's book has a foreword by Patrick Moore—but don't be put off. It is nevertheless quite well worth reading, and the style is much better than that of Mr. Moore. I found the volume very entertaining, thought-provoking and readable. Berry has worked on the science staff of the DAILY TELEGRAPH, I think many BUFORA members would enjoy reading his book. The address of the publisher is 30, Bedford Square, London WC1.

THE DENNIS WHEATLEY LIBRARY OF THE OCCULT :

DRACULA by Bram Stoker—45p. 384pp.

THE WEREWOLF OF PARIS by Guy Endore—40p. 264pp.

MOONCHILD by Aleister Crowley—40p. 304pp.

STUDIES IN OCCULTISM by Mme Elena Blavatsky—40p. 192pp.

CARNACKI THE GHOST FINDER by Wm. Hope Hodgson—40p. 240pp.

THE SORCERY CLUB by Elliot O'Donnell—45p. 256pp.

Published by Sphere Books, 30/32, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8JL.

I know that many readers of the BUFORA Journal have an interest in the occult, so they will doubtless welcome this uniformly-bound paperback set from Sphere. Of the six books, only STUDIES IN OCCULTISM claims to be a non-fiction work, but the others have been written by those with knowledge of the occult. If you enjoy Dennis Wheatley's excellent black magic and occult books, I am sure you will appreciate this set of classics. They make an attractive addition to your bookshelf.

MARK STENHOFF, F.R.A.S.

Having read 'THE MOONCHILD' myself, I would add that it throws a totally different light on Crowley's character as the popularly imagined "beast." Admitted, the main character is a thinly disguised Crowley, but a deal of sincerity shows through an absorbing if to some—fanciful tale. Ed.

"BLACK HOLES : THE END OF THE UNIVERSE?" by John Taylor; publ. Souvenir Press; pp. 174. (Not illus. index; bibliography)—£2·50.

"LOST WORLDS : SCIENTIFIC SECRETS OF THE ANCIENTS" by Robert Charroux; publ. Souvenir Press; pp. 354 (16 plates; index)—£2·75.

"CITY OF REVELATION" by John Michell; publ. Abacus; pp. 176 (Illus; index)—£0·50.

"REPORT ON PLANET THREE—AND OTHER SPECULATIONS" by Arthur C. Clarke; publ. Corgi; pp. 255—£0·35.

"THE BIBLE AND FLYING SAUCERS" by Barry H. Downing; publ. Sphere; pp. 175 (not illus; no index)—£0·35.

"BEYOND THE TIME BARRIER" by Andrew Tomas; publ. Sphere; pp. 160 (8 plates; no index)—£0·35.

"**BLACK HOLES**" is a book which deals with the implications of these phenomena for mankind. A black hole is formed when a massive star has used up all its fuel and cannot stop itself collapsing inwards. The collapsing star attracts any light shone at it, and prevents it ever escaping. "**BLACK HOLES**" which deals superficially with UFOs, has not received good reviews in the popular scientific press. It is written in a highly speculative vein, and while it therefore makes entertaining reading, it is said to contain a number of serious errors. John Taylor is Professor of Mathematics at King's College, University of London.

"**LOST WORLDS**" is another rather sensational—perhaps over-sensational—book of the "von Däniken" variety, concerning itself with accounts and artefacts from early times. For those who enjoyed von Däniken and books of this nature (of which there already seems to me to be an excessive number), this book may prove interesting. However, the translation is not so good as that of the von Däniken books.

"**CITY OF REVELATION**" a treatise "on the proportion and symbolic numbers of the cosmic temple"—is one of those curious books that a sceptic such as your reviewer tends to reject out of hand. In any event, the obscurantism and mysticism, the numerology and pseudo-geometry would all provide excellent material for a future edition of "*The Psychology of Superstition*" (Gustav Jahoda/Pelican), which, incidentally, is a book we recommend.

"**REPORT ON PLANET THREE**" by Arthur C. Clarke is certainly the best-written book reviewed here, as one might expect. It contains some twenty-three conjectural essays. This collection is not aimed at scientific fact (it is part of the CORGI SF Collector's Library), but is clearly intended to be abstract and tentative. The chapter on UFOs (Essay 19: "Things in the Sky") is interesting but sceptical, and the seemingly personalized method Clarke uses to reject the phenomenon is highly unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the book is thoroughly recommended.

"THE BIBLE AND FLYING SAUCERS" has now appeared for the first time in Britain. It is probably already known to BUFORA readers, although this new edition contains additional appendices and preface. Interesting, but speculative. The hypotheses advanced on UFOs and the Bible are no more verifiable than the content of the Bible itself.

"BEYOND THE TIME BARRIER" is a dissertation on the enigmas of time, by the author of "We Are Not The First," Andrew Tomas. While this book might be criticized (as might most "fringe" literature) for unsubstantiated speculation, it will doubtless be a popular work.

MARK STENHOFF, F.R.A.S.

STEPHANIE PEARSON

JAMES CROCKETT

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REVIEW 3

UFOs FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN* by Ion Hobana & Julien Weverbergh. Souvenir Press, 1974. £3.

This doubtless worthy but unexciting book is a report by a Rumanian journalist and a Dutch writer on the development and state of ufology in the countries of the Eastern European bloc. The investigation of reported UFOs seems to be even less organised than those we have in the West, and all comment and dissemination of reports appears to be in the hands of authority, which is no more able to handle the matter than are the official bodies in the Western countries. Also, due to the climate of suspicion and the secretive nature of these States, the existence and possibility of such phenomena as UFOs was not known of by the general public in these countries until well into the 1960s.

Chapter One is concerned with the Tungus 'explosion' in Siberia, at the beginning of this century, and gives some interesting details of the researches that have been done in recent years into this occurrence. Then the official Russian attitude to UFO reports is examined. It turns out to be pretty much the same as we experience here, i.e. 'There ain't no such animal, so it is pointless to waste time studying it.' Of private UFO research groups there is no mention, so we must assume that they do not exist (other than author Hobana's own group), and there are no magazines reporting the phenomena.

The rest of the book is largely devoted to sighting reports of LITS by night and the apparently solid artefacts seen by day with which Western ufologists are now very familiar. Most of the reports are not sufficiently detailed to be of use in a statistical analysis, but the book as a whole will provide useful answers to those critics who ask why all UFOs are seen in Western Europe and none in the East. There is a 52-item bibliography for the Tungus explosion, many witnessess' sketches relating to the sightings reported, and a few photographs of UFOs that are probably new to ufologists in the West.

COLIN BORD.

SOME TRUST IN CHARIOTS! Edited by E. W. Castle & B. B. Thiering.
Published by Bailey Bros. and Swinfen Ltd., Folkestone, 1973. £1.75.

In 1968 a Swiss, Erich von Däniken, wrote a book which was published in Britain with the title CHARIOTS OF THE GODS? His theme was that the impetus which turned early man from a savage into a civilised being was given by extra-terrestrials who landed on earth at the dawn of history and whose impact on humanity is recorded in legend, myth, religious writings and the skills shown in the development of ancient artefacts.

This idea was not original; there were already a number of authors who had written books on the same theme before von Däniken. Such writers as Brinsley le Poer Trench, Desmond Leslie, Raymond Drake, George Hunt Williamson, Paul Thomas (Misraki) and Barry Downing had all used the same basic theme in their writings and had generally produced books that were better written and more honest than von Däniken's. Yet this author, who seems to have plagiarised from all those mentioned above, has had a phenomenal success. The English hardback publication has sold over 110,000 copies (compare this figure with the 20,000 copies that a best-selling novel by an unknown author can expect to hope for), Corgi have sold over 1 million in the paperback edition, it has been translated into 28 languages and total world sales have now topped 13 million and haven't stopped yet. The *Sunday Mirror* ran a four-part serial of it which was nationally advertised using the title of one of the chapters of the book—'Was God an Astronaut?' And a wide-screen film has been made about the book's contents by a German company. What can account for such success?

Whereas the other authors mentioned have generally approached their theme with circumspection and a regard for the facts, as they are known, von Däniken made a full-scale attack on scientists and archaeologists with unsupported charges of suppression, and he frequently distorted and misreported, never giving any references for his statements. Perhaps it is another case of 'nothing succeeds like excess.'

The uncritical enthusiasm with which CHARIOTS OF THE GODS? has been received has prompted a group of Australian academics to compile a counter-attack and this has been published as SOME TRUST IN CHARIOTS! This is in the form of 17 short papers, each by a different specialist who critically examine von Däniken's book in the light of their own disciplines. They range from archaeologists and philologists to theologians and a civil engineer. The general consensus is that von Däniken's writing is careless and inaccurate calculated to mislead, poorly researched and sloppily written and translated. (On page 1 he describes the earth as a 'star'). His mathematics are meaningless and his rhetorical style continually seeks to make mysteries where none exist. Domestic and unsupported statements such as 'this stone could never have been moved by human hands' are frequent. Theologically his arguments are naive, 'and reveal no awareness of the value of the last 100 years of Biblical scholarship.'

Two of the contributors attempt to analyse the reasons for the success of CHARIOTS OF THE GODS ?, and as a sociological phenomenon this is surely the most interesting aspect of von Däniken's success. One of the reasons why von Däniken's mish-mash of error, half-truth and exaggeration has been so eagerly accepted is because of the way history is so often taught in our schools. This usually starts with the expansion of the Roman Empire which, so it is told, brought light and technology to a world of ignorant savagery. The ancient cultures of the Near East, Europe, Britain, the Americans, and Asia with their varied artefacts of beauty and skill, their social systems and their technological achievements are lost in a limbo of academic disregard. It is not surprising that an unscrupulous author can present these unknown civilisations in popular form to the unfortunate victim of this educational process as 'miracles' that could only have stemmed from an alien technology and to rely on the ignorance of his readers to be unaware of his mismanagement of the facts.

The second interesting theory, but barely mentioned, to account for the book's success is the 'cargo cult' idea. As modern technological man finds the world he has helped to create becoming more out of his control and spinning towards its own doom, there is great comfort in the thought that somewhere out there are infinitely wise and intelligent beings who at the twelfth hour will float down in their chariots of lights and save us from ourselves.

Needless to say, SOME TRUST IN CHARIOTS! will not receive a fraction of the publicity and sales that von Däniken's book has had. It is not sensational and therefore is of no interest to the media, so it will never reach the millions of gullible souls who have swallowed von Däniken whole. But it is likely to provide some ammunition for those who may be suffering from an overdose of chariots from their more gullible and enthusiastic brethren. However, this book reveals signs of hasty compilation—some of the sections overlap and are repetitious. It could probably have been of greater effect and more authoritative if fewer contributors had been able to write at greater length and in more detail. Even so, for all who have an interest in the basic idea of other intelligences intervening in man's development (which in spite of von Däniken's excesses is still a viable possibility), this book can help to provide a balanced picture, and there are plenty of references given for those who want to follow them up, and obtain some genuine facts upon these matters.

COLIN BORD.

FOR SALE :—Large Astronomical Photographic instrument used for three years as Telescopic Space Camera for UFO research in New Zealand. 6in. diameter lens. Rack and pinion focussing, adjustable crosswire finder. Equatorially mounted on strong metal tripod. £200.00 o.n.o. Details and photograph from Mr. D. Rodway, 42 Colwood Crescent, Eastbourne, Sussex.

BRITISH SIGHTING REPORTS

Dunstable, Beds. Between 8-9.00 p.m. Approx. 3 years ago.

Standing outside a shop, Mr. Kenneth Price glanced up, to see, at an angle of approximately 60° to the horizon, an orange object, with no recognizable shape in the North. After asking a few friends to watch with him with no success, they were returning home, when they turned to see 5 disc-shaped objects at about 33° . These objects were visible for about 3 minutes; they seemed to have a number of round portholes, and looked as if they were revolving. All the friends turned and ran, a little later Mr. Price looked back and all of the objects had disappeared.

—o—

Report: 73—080. Widnes, Cheshire. 11.40 a.m., 27th August, 1973.

The witness, who is sixteen, was observing the Plough through 10 x 50 binoculars. He noted a bright yellow disc-shaped object which was rising from above some houses. It was in view for 30-40 seconds gathering speed. It went out of sight travelling faster than an aircraft.

—o—

Report: 73—081. Gainsborough, Lincs. 3.00 a.m., November, 1973.

A large mushroom-shaped object was seen to hover for ten minutes outside an Old Peoples home in Lincolnshire. It was described as being a blend of yellow, orange and red 'like fire.' It seemed to be enveloped in smoke or mist. The witness left to continue her work and on return there was no trace.

—o—

Report: 74—019. Worcester. 2.15 a.m., 3rd June, 1974.

The witness, who is an auxiliary nurse, observed the flight of two unidentified objects, travelling South to North, from her kitchen window. She described them as star-like, at least six times the size of normal stars (which were visible), bright steel blue/white colour with long rays emanating. The objects proceeded in a straight line, low in the sky, and seemed to curve downwards out of sight behind some houses. The second object which was approximately three minutes behind the first appeared to hover briefly before continuing its course. She had the impression that they were distant, moving very fast, and were followed by a shadow of indefinable shape. There were several other witnesses to this case, including a train driver and his mate who observed the object hovering. When the train stopped the object stopped with them. Investigation continuing.

—o—

Report: 74—023. Harborne, Birmingham. p.m., July, 1974.

Mysterious lights have been flashing through the summer skies of Harborne on virtually every clear night. They are of varying sizes and colours (most often white, occasionally green or yellow) and seen to be high in the sky, following very erratic flight paths and making instantaneous manoeuvres. There is some doubt exactly when they were first seen (sometime in June) but at the time of investigation the main witness, Mrs. Westwood (a former police officer) was still seeing them

(July 20th). On one occasion a triangular formation of two red lights led by a white one were apparently chased by a military aircraft. They were described as ghost-like oval shapes and winked out suddenly when the aircraft got close to them. The noise of the aircraft was heard, but the other sightings have been silent except on one occasion when a noise described at first as like 'distant lorries on a motor-way' and on suggestion as like a 'generator' was heard in connection. Obviously this investigation is still incomplete—but no natural cause has yet been found for the phenomena.

Report: 74—024. Saltash, Cornwall. 9.20 p.m., 24th April, 1974.

"On this Wednesday evening the time being around 9.20 p.m., I was returning home. I had seen an aeroplane flying earlier in a west to east direction which had left a vapour trail clearly against the night sky. Whilst looking at this, I noticed a light in the sky, which came past a near-by star. The light was golden bright in colour, and round. It moved straight down. Then I noticed a smaller round light the same colour, emerge from it and make a V-shape in the sky, then fade away completely. I continued to watch the larger light until that too disappeared."

Report: 74—034. Tynant-Beddau, Glam. 10.50 a.m., 14th or 21st June, 1974.

Over a period of ten days the chief witness, a housewife, sighted fourteen bright lights travelling silently through the sky. The first of these was observed from a bedroom window, others were seen on brief skywatches purposely to find them. A visit was also made to a nearby mountain where eight lights were seen in a few hours and a comparison was possible with two aircraft which flew over (the lights were different and these were heard). There were other witnesses to these latter sightings (her son and daughter-in-law), the most spectacular report was of a brilliant white star-like object, very low and large in size. It seemed to be surrounded by a fuzzy halo and gave an impression of revolving. It was in view for five or six minutes silently gliding out of sight over a mountain. This was witnessed by all her family and her next door neighbour (7 in all) and all were highly impressed by it.

It should be noted that the witness is an oil paint artist so presumably has a flair for detail, but inconsistencies (particularly in dates of sightings) do occur.

Report: 74—039a. Hereford. 9.15 a.m., 28th May, 1974.

Two witnesses on a skywatch observed a round metallic object with lights flashing white and orange. It was viewed through binoculars for about thirty seconds, silently following an erratic path. It seemed to be tracking a high flying jet aircraft and was constantly bobbing up and down whilst following a directional course at the same time. It disappeared suddenly. BUFORA's logistics adviser comments that a 'wave' formation of flight would be an ideal way of tracking an aircraft at high speed whilst making detection difficult. He also notes that the lack of a vapour trail (whilst the aircraft it closely followed had one) may be significant as to the UFOs propulsion system.

Report: 74—039b. Hereford. p.m., 5th/6th August, 1974.

The same two witnesses as for report 74—039a followed their usual practice of skywatching on these two nights and sighted a bright white light. It was first seen at 22.10 on the 5th following a silent South-North East course. It veered to the left and disappeared. The following night another light, travelling slower and appearing brighter, was followed on a West-East path at 22.20. One of the witnesses made a further sighting at 23.45, when a light which had been taken as a star began to move slowly. It moved relative to the star background for one minute, stopped, intensified its brightness, moved away at right angles growing dimmer, completed a triangle and finally stopped intensifying again until it appeared to be a normal star. Reports had flooded into the Hereford Evening News that afternoon, although this was not known to the witnesses at the time. However, the silver object then reported was subsequently 'identified' as a balloon.

Both witnesses are experienced skywatchers, familiar with natural phenomena and all observations were made visually and through binoculars.

Report: 74—042. Fulham. 9 to 10 a.m., November, 1968 or 9.

The witness, who was 10 or 11 at the time, observed a golden yellow object for a few seconds from her bedroom window. It was described as like an egg on its side (when observed full on) and circular (when seen from the side). At first it moved slowly, then increased in speed, turned a sudden 180° and moved back to where it had come from. It then sped out of sight.

Report: 74—057. Milton, Stoke-on-Trent. 16th August, 1974. (a) 9.30-10.15.
(b) 11.00-11.20.

At about 9.30 on the 16th August, Mrs. Marian Carthidge observed a bright shining light travelling across the sky from S./S.W. to N./N.E. at a steady rate. For a few seconds it disappeared behind a clump of large trees, then it reappeared, and headed towards the horizon and disappeared over it. Another two objects appeared then, followed the same course, then faded over the horizon. Another three objects appeared, two of these following the same path as the other objects, the third one travelling from West to North. All of these sightings lasted for about 2 minutes, and except for the latter object, all disappeared over the horizon, the latter sighting faded out above the horizon.

At about 11 o'clock a star like object appeared, and travelled from S/SW to East at a steady rate, and then accelerated upwards at an angle of approximately 120°, then it faded out of sight. At 11.20 a similar object appeared, still travelling in the same direction, but this time it speeded up, and disappeared at an angle of about 130°.

(An almost identical report (74—056) was received from Mrs. S. A. Steele of Milton.—Ed).

Report: 74—059. Nr. London Airport. Daytime, May, 1974.

An extremely well qualified observer (M.Sc. & Ph.d.) observed a silver spherical object in the skies close to London Airport. He is well used to travelling by air and is certain that it was not an aircraft. After remaining virtually motionless for half a minute it just disappeared.

Report: 74—060. Newcastle-on-Tyne. 11.40 p.m., 11th August, 1974.

Whilst watching TV from a darkened room, Mr. & Mrs. Charlton noticed that an extremely bright light was flooding in from outside. Rushing out they observed the passage of an orange/red object which illuminated the sky around it. It travelled at a low altitude and seemed to grow bigger as if approaching. It then seemed to turn on its side, change shape and grow smaller. After being observed for three minutes it disappeared. The local paper received other reports for that night of white missile shaped objects.

Report: 74—063. Telford, Shropshire. 9.45 p.m., 16th August, 1974.

The witness was returning home from work when he sighted an oval shaped object the size of a florin at arms length. It hovered for ten minutes, regularly changing colour from blue-red-green-white. It then vanished travelling straight downwards.

WHAT YOU SAY . . .

Dear Sir,

The other week I read "The New U.F.O. Breakthrough" by Brad Steiger and Joan Whritenour. Chapter three dealt with Dr. Wilhelm Reich and his discovery of cosmic orgone energy, and how he drew this energy off some U.F.O.'s by means of his "cloud buster."

Does anyone know whether, since Dr. Reich's death, any of his experiments in this field have been successfully repeated?

Yours faithfully,

K. KNIGHTS,
Charlton Kings,
Glos.

Dear Mr. Oliver,

I have just read Mr. Burrows' very interesting theory on the origin of UFOs (Summer Journal).

A thought that occurred to me was that if it could be proved that all unexplained (after investigation) UFOs had their source in electrical discharges, BUFORA would probably suffer an almost instant slump in its membership figures. However, I don't think our Association need worry, since I have always been of the opinion that most members hope (secretly or not) that the explanation(s) of the UFO phenomenon will lie "in the realms of fantasy!"

Yours sincerely,

HENRY CHESTER,
London, W.3.

Dear Editor,

G. Burrows is to be congratulated on his clear and interesting hypothesis to explain UFOs "in terms of known physical phenomena." I would not dispute anything he says for some UFO reports, just as some reports arise from satellites, aircraft, birds, Venus, hallucinations, dreams, hysteria, meteors and the like.

However, Mr. Burrows can only be explaining some UFO reports, not all.
For his explanation cannot account for:

- (a) flying fast against the wind; (d) contacts with occupants;
- (b) paralysis of witnesses; (e) large varieties of noises.
- (c) landings with holes made in the ground;

I would also like to ask Mr. Burrows whether his explanation can account for visual observations with radar confirmation. All the above characteristics have been reported many times by witnesses of indisputable character, judgement and intelligence. Men of the eminence of Dr. Hynek and Professor Oberth are not so easily led by the nose.

Yours,

P. HILL, M.I.W.S.P.,
Chairman, Wessex Association
for the Study of Unexplained Phenomena.

Dear Sir,

I was interested in the theory described by Mr. G. Burrows in BUFORA Journal, Vol. 4, No. 3, that UFOs could be produced by a vortex motion in the atmosphere with the development of positive and negative electrical charges in the region of such a vortex.

In a letter to the Daily Mail of 3rd Sept., 1973, Mr. A. Billingham of Bedford seemed to express a similar view, that UFOs were produced by a 'vortex ring'—in this case associated with atomic tests and subsequent fall-out. Correspondence on this subject provided further information. This particular theory in that following an atomic test tenuous electrically charged substance would ascend into the upper atmosphere in a vortex ring. This would sooner or later descend towards the ground, and the ring-luminous as a result of an electrical discharge effect would be attracted to or repelled by other electrically charged air masses, thereby giving the appearance of a UFO.

Mr. Burrows mentions in his article that a UFO produced by a vortex phenomenon "could be accompanied by the usual crackling sound of a continuous electrical discharge" and that the launching of satellites would cause the formation of a local vortex. I believe that any sound associated with UFOs at close range is usually described as a whistling or humming. Perhaps someone who has studied the description of sounds associated with UFO sightings could confirm this.

On the subject of satellite launches, I recall reports of UFOs being linked with some of the early rocket launches. I don't know whether this has been noted as a more general phenomenon with the intensified programme of satellite launchings in recent years.

It seems to me that the vortex theory would be a satisfactory explanation if UFOs were just tenuous or ill defined luminous blobs. The theory may in fact explain some sightings of this type. It is evident however from many close range "Type 1" sightings that UFOs seem to exhibit the characteristics of solid controlled objects. We still seem to be left with a hard core of sightings for which there is at present no natural explanation.

Yours sincerely,
G. FALLA,
St. Peter Port, Guernsey.

Dear Mr. Oliver,

Re the Mimi Gorzelle contact claim The examination in this case seems entirely different to the B & BH case, at least the part of it that Mimi Gorzelle can remember—being more of a ‘Psychic’ than ‘Medical’ nature. In this case, the space-man placed a stethoscope type instrument on to the back of his neck and proceeded to ‘feel’ impulses from the psychic centres—those being the head, neck, throat, heart and solar plexus. He placed the ‘stethoscope’ not into his ears but on the back of his neck. Mimi Gorzelle assumes that there must be a sensitive gland on this part of the neck, sensitive to psychic impulses, a gland which we know nothing about. But we do!—at least in my opinion this particular ‘Psychic gland’ could well be the Medulla Oblongata through which—in Yoga philosophy—the ‘Cosmic Life Forces’ (Prana) enters the body and is then distributed to all parts of the body

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET WILTON,
Greenock,
Renfrewshire.

* * * * *

The Hon. Membership Secretary wishes to remind members who have not yet renewed their subscriptions, that they are now overdue, and to ensure continuity of membership, that they should do so without delay. She regrets that due to ever increasing calls on her time, it is no longer possible to write personally to each member.

* * * * *

I was recently told of a sighting a friend of mine had a few years back, and I think it's sufficiently unusual to be of interest. The friend concerned (not a BUFORA member) doesn't wish for any publicity, so I'll just call him K.W.:—

K.W. was driving along in his car between Horsham and Crawley in Sussex one October night in 1970: the time was around 10 p.m. On looking in his mirror, he became aware of four ‘egg-shaped’ objects above the car quite close—the nearest apparently only a few hundred feet away. His first thought was that they were reflections of the yellow road lights, then he realised they were much too big. He then pulled the car into the kerb, got out and saw these four objects lined up in ‘some sort of manoeuvre.’ He estimated that each was about 40 feet across and there was about 400 to 500 feet between them. They all glowed yellow-orange: there was no sign of life and no noise at all. K.W. went to walk towards the one that appeared nearest and they all sped off at a fantastic speed—previously they had been hovering. As no one else was about he got back in his car again and drove away.

NORMAN OLIVER.

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